

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- New research estimates up to [44,000 Americans](#) are dying annually from preventable hospital errors. This puts medical errors as the third leading cause of death in the United States, underscoring the need for patients to protect themselves and their families from harm, and for hospitals to make patient safety a priority.

Released today, the Fall 2013 update to [The Leapfrog Group](#) (Leapfrog) Hospital Safety Score assigns A, B, C, D and F grades to more than 2,500 U.S. general hospitals. It shows many hospitals are making headway in addressing errors, accidents, injuries and infections that kill or hurt patients, but overall progress is slow. The Hospital Safety Score is calculated under the guidance of the Leapfrog Blue Ribbon Expert Panel, with a fully transparent methodology analyzed in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Patient Safety*. Jo

Leapfrog, an independent, national nonprofit organization that administers the Score, is an advocate for patient safety nationwide.

"We are burying a population the size of Miami every year from medical errors that can be prevented. A number of hospitals have improved by one or even two grades, indicating hospitals are taking steps toward safer practices, but these efforts aren't enough," says Leah Binder

, president and CEO of Leapfrog. "During this time of rapid health care transformation, it's vital that we work together to arm patients with the information they need and tell doctors and hospitals that the time for change is now."

As result of the push for more public reporting of hospitals' safety efforts, Leapfrog added two new measures to the latest Hospital Safety Score release, including Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infections (CAUTIs) and Surgical Site Infections: Colon (SSI: Colon). While CAUTIs and SSI: Colon have not received as much public attention as other measures, they are among the most common hospital infections and claim a combined 18,000 lives each year. With data from the CMS Hospital Compare website as well as the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, Leapfrog now has the publicly available data needed to calculate these critical measures into the Score.

CAUTI and SSI: Colon are among the 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data used to produce a single grade representing a hospital's overall safety rating.

The Hospital Safety Score is a public service available at no cost online or on the free mobile app at www.hospitalsafetyscore.org . A full analysis of the data and [methodology](#) used is also available on the Hospital Safety Score website.

Key Findings

- Of the 2,539 general hospitals issued a Hospital Safety Score, 813 earned an "A," 661 earned a "B," 893 earned a "C," 150 earned a "D" and 22 earned an "F."
- On average, there was no improvement in hospitals' reported performance on the measures included in the score, with the exception of hospital adoption of computerized physician order entry (CPOE). The expansion in adoption of this lifesaving technology suggests that federal policy efforts to improve hospital technology have shown some success.
- While overall hospitals report little improvement in safety, some individual hospitals (3.5 percent) showed dramatic improvements of two or more grade levels.
- The states with the smallest percentage of "A" hospitals include New Hampshire, Arkansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, and New Mexico. No hospitals in New Mexico

or the
District of Columbia
received an "A" grade.

- Maine claimed the number-one spot for the state with the highest percentage of "A" hospitals.
- Kaiser and Sentara were among the hospital systems that achieved straight "A" grades, meaning 100 percent of their hospitals received an "A."

For more information about the Hospital Safety Score or to view the list of state rankings, please visit www.hospitalsafetyscore.org . Journalists interested in scheduling an interview should contact LeapfrogMedia@sternassociates.com .

About The Leapfrog Group The Hospital Safety Score is an initiative of The Leapfrog Group (www.leapfroggroup.org), a national nonprofit organization using the collective leverage of large purchasers of health care to initiate breakthrough improvements in the safety, quality and affordability of health care for Americans. The flagship Leapfrog Hospital Survey allows purchasers to structure their contracts and purchasing to reward the highest performing hospitals. The Leapfrog Group was founded in November 2000 with support from the Business Roundtable and national funders and is now independently operated with support from its purchaser and other members.

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